

## Message Text

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45

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 IOE-00 HEW-08 CU-04

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15

PRS-01 SPC-03 DRC-01 /097 W  
----- 121659

P R 291441Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7121

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I W L HELSINKI 0194

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AORG, APER, SG, UNESCO (SORSA, K.)

SUBJECT: SELECTION OF NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO

REF: STATE 017454 (NOTAL)

1. IN MID-JANUARY FINNISH NEWSPAPERS CARRIED SHORT ITEMS SPECULATING THAT NORDIC COUNTRIES WERE GOING TO SUPPORT THE PRESENT FINNISH PRIME MINISTER, KALEVI SORSA, FOR THE UNESCO DG POST. THE NEWSPAPERS ALSO CLAIMED THAT OTHER COUNTRIES WERE SUPPORTING SORSA, WITHOUT NAMING THEM.

2. THE STORY SURFACED IN CONNECTION WITH THE VISIT OF SENEGAL'S MINISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, OUSMANE CAMARA, TO HELSINKI. THE NEWSPAPERS POINTED OUT THAT  
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CAMARA WAS CARRYING A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT SENGHOR

AND ADDUCED THAT THIS MESSAGE CONCERNED SENEGAL'S CANDIDACY FOR THE UNESCO POST.

3. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY ONE OF OUR FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES THAT CAMARA'S VISIT WAS PRIMARILY RELATED TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING GUINEA-BISSAU AND PORTUGUESE AFRICA.

4. NONE OF THE SEVERAL KNOWLEDGEABLE PEOPLE WE HAVE TALKED TO SINCE THE SURFACING OF THE SORSA STORY FIND IT BEYOND THE REALM OF POSSIBILITY, BUT NONE OF THEM ASCRIBE MUCH LIKELIHOOD TO SORSA BEING SERIOUS ABOUT IT -- SINCE TAKING THE UNESCO POST WOULD EFFECTIVELY REMOVE SORSA FROM THE MAINSTREAM OF FINNISH POLITICS AND A CHANCE AT THE PRESIDENCY IN 1978. AS MATTERS NOW STAND, SORSA IS EXPECTED TO BE PICKED AS THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S CANDIDATE, IF HE WANTS IT, BUT IS NOT EXPECTED TO HAVE MUCH CHANCE OF WINNING.

5. SORSA'S PUBLIC REACTION TO THE REPORT WAS LOW-KEY, NEITHER ADMITTING NOR DENYING HIS CANDIDACY FOR THE UNESCO POST. IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO RETURN TO PARIS AND UNESCO, WHERE HE SERVED AS A RATHER LOW LEVEL PROGRAM SPECIALIST FROM 1959 TO 1965, WHEN HE BECAME THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FINNISH UNESCO COMMITTEE. SORSA SPEAKS FLUENT FRENCH AND ENGLISH, IS A MODERATE SOCIAL DEMOCRAT, AND WAS FOREIGN MINISTER BEFORE BECOMING PRIME MINISTER FIFTEEN MONTHS AGO. THE EMBASSY HAS HAD GOOD RELATIONS WITH HIM AND FINDS HIM AT LEAST NOT ANTI-AMERICAN. DESPITE THE EXPERIENCE THAT SORSA HAS GAINED SINCE HIS TIME AT UNESCO, IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER HE IS UP TO THE PRESSURE AND INTERNATIONAL INFIGHTING INVOLVED IN THE DG JOB. ALTHOUGH WE KNOW THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE SORSA, OR ANY SOCIAL DEMOCRAT, BECOME PRESIDENT OF FINLAND, WE ARE LESS SURE OF WHAT THEIR POSITION WOULD BE CONCERNING HIS POSSIBLE DG CANDIDACY.  
KREHBIEL

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** boyleja  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SELECTION OF NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO  
**TAGS:** AORG, APER, SG, (SORSA, K)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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